

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

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R 221956Z SEP 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
INFO USLO PEKING

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BGEN, CH, ETRD

SUBJECT: PROPOSED LEGISLATION AND IMPORTS FROM PRC -
RABBIT MEAT

1. MISSION MAY INFORM LOCAL IMPORT EXPORT FIRM THAT
H.R. 1502 WOULD EXTEND THE APPLICATION OF THE MANDATORY
INSPECTION PROVISIONS OF THE POULTRY PRODUCTS INSPECTION
ACT (21USC 451-70) TO INCLUDE THE SLAUGHTER OF RABBITS
AND THE CARCASSES, MEAT, AND PRODUCTS THEREOF INTENDED FOR
HUMAN CONSUMPTION. IN SO DOING, IT WOULD ALSO HAVE THE
INCIDENTAL EFFECT OF INTRODUCING A REQUIREMENT THAT ANY
FOREIGN COUNTRY, INCLUDING THE PRC, DESIRING TO EXPORT
SUCH ARTICLES TO THE UNITED STATES WOULD HAVE TO HAVE AN
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INSPECTION SYSTEM EQUAL TO THAT REQUIRED BY THE UNITED

STATES LAW AND IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS. IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH AN INSPECTION SYSTEM IN THE EXPORTING COUNTRY, ITS SHIPMENTS OF FORZEN RABBITS OR ANY OF THE OTHER ARTICLES OF INTEREST WOULD NOT BE ENTITLED TO ADMISSION INTO UNITED STATES COMMERCE. COMPLIANCE WITH THE "EQUAL TO" PROVISIONS OF THE AMENDED ACT WOULD BE VERIFIED BY USDA REPRESENTATIVES TRAVELING IN THE COUNTRY OF EXPORTATION.

2. ON SEPTEMBER 11 A DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE SPOKESMAN TESTIFIED AGAINST ENACTMENT OF THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION IN THE COURSE OF A PUBLIC HEARING CONVENED BY THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK AND GRAINS. NOT BEING DISSUADED, THE SUBCOMMITTEE, BY A VOICE VOTE, DECIDED TO REPORT THE MEASURE OUT FAVORABLY TO THE FULL COMMITTEE THE SAME DAY.

3. SINCE CONSIDERATION OF THE BILL IS STILL IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO GIVE ANY MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE ACTION FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE CALENDARS OF BUSINESS OR THE LIKELIHOOD OF PASSAGE. THE NEXT STEP IN THE HOUSE IS FULL AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF THE BILL. ONE CONGRESSIONAL SOURCE CLOSELY FOLLOWING THE PROGRESS OF THE BILL BELIEVES THAT IT WILL MOVE OUT OF THAT COMMITTEE TO THE HOUSE FLOOR EARLY IN THE FALL.

4. SIMILAR LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN EACH OF THE PAST TWO CONGRESSES DID NOT REACH THE FINAL STAGE OF LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATION. INGERSOLL

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